Opening of Post Offices/Sub Post Offices in Himachal Pradesh

2028. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are contemplating to set up new post offices/sub-post offices for strengthening the postal services in the hilly areas of Himachal Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. There is target for opening 10 Branch Post Offices and one Sub Post Office for Himachal Pradesh Circle during the Annual Plan 1999-2000 subject to norm based justification and availability of resources.

(c) Does not arise in view of (a) and (b) above.

Waiting list for telephone Connections in Assam

2029. SHRIMATI BASANTI SARMA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of persons waiting for telephone connection in various districts of Assam as on 30th November, 1999; and

(b) by when Government propose to provide telephone connections to all the waitlisted persons of Assam?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) the number of persons waiting for telephone connections in various districts of Assam as on 30.11.99 is as per the enclosed statement *(see* below)

(b) the department is likely to provide telephone connections to all waitlisted persons of Assam by March, 2000 progressively.